

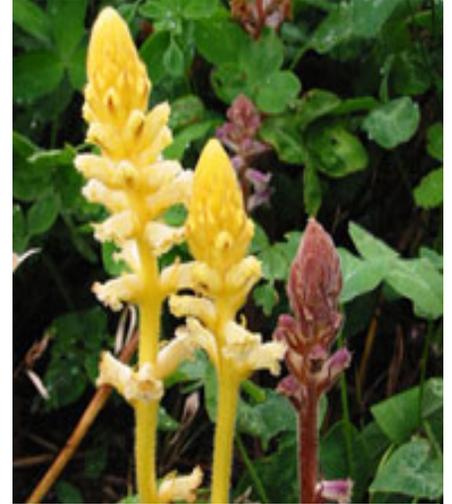
“B” Rated Weeds

A weed of economic importance which is regionally abundant,
but may have limited distribution in some counties

Small broomrape
Orobanche minor

Other common names: none noted

USDA symbol: ORMI
ODA rating: B



Introduction: Small broomrape is one species in a large group of parasitic plants that attack a wide diversity of host species. Small broomrape is important because it attacks economically important legume crops. Broomrape seeds are like dust and easily contaminate seed lots that are shipped around the world. It is present in the Willamette Valley.

Distribution: The first documented site in Oregon was in 1923 in Multnomah County. It can be found in several north Willamette Valley counties wherever clover seed crops are grown.

Description: Annual; blooms within a week of plant emergence. Grows 6 to 12 inches tall. Like other parasitic plants, small broomrape lacks chlorophyll. The flower stalk is yellowish-brown, unbranched with a purplish tint. Leaves look like small triangular scales. Flowers pinkish, yellow or white in color and arranged in an elongated spike.

Impacts: Upon germination, the first root attaches to and penetrates the root of the host plant, usually clover and other legumes, disrupting nutrients and water transport in the host root system. It has the ability to produce up to 500,000 seeds per plant that are dispersed by wind, tillage equipment, harvesters, commodity movement and animals. An uprooted flowering plant will continue to produce seed. Heavy infestations can cause severe crop damage that may result in nearly total crop failure. It is especially problematic in clover crops where the *Orobanche* seeds are hard to detect or remove during mechanical cleaning of harvested seed.

Biological controls: None identified.

